

Chapter 4 - LCGMA Evaluation Recommendations (RECs)

Based on examination and evaluation of the 2000 LCGMA Rangeland Health assessment data, the following recommendations for resource management have been proposed by the Jordan Resource Area interdisciplinary team.

RANGELAND VEGETATION

The following recommendations address Rangeland Health Standard 1 (*Watershed function, uplands*) and Standard 3 (*Ecological processes*):

RV REC1: Manage grazing use in native rangelands so that utilization levels are consistent with other resource values.

RV REC2: Manage Starvation Brush Control Pasture south of Antelope Creek to allow for the expression of understory herbaceous and forb species.

SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES

The following recommendation addresses Rangeland Health Standard 3 (*Ecological processes*):

SS PLANTS REC1: Manage the land within the LCGMA to maintain, restore, or enhance populations and habitats of special status plant species with particular emphasis on the two species considered most vulnerable: Davis peppergrass and profuse-flowered mesa mint.

RIPARIAN AND AQUATIC HABITATS (RIP)

The following recommendations address Rangeland Health Standard 2 (*Watershed function, riparian*), Standard 4 (*Water Quality*), and Standard 5 (*Native, T&E, or locally important species—Riparian*):

RIP REC 1: Alleviate hot and late-season grazing in riparian areas, where, because of livestock grazing impacts, riparian/wetland areas do not meet Rangeland Health Standards 2, 4, and 5. Incorporate early-season or winter use and rest to allow regrowth of riparian vegetation and avoid utilization of woody riparian species, such as willows.

RIP REC 2: Fence or otherwise exclude livestock from streams and riparian/wetland areas if early-season grazing is not feasible. In addition, fence to exclude livestock from those riparian areas (springs, wetlands, or streams) that are assessed as Functioning-at-Risk with a downward trend. Ensure that corridor fence placement is sufficiently outside of Riparian Conservation Areas to allow for lateral expansion of hydric soils and riparian vegetation.

RIP REC 3: In pastures, where, because of livestock grazing impacts, riparian/wetland areas do not meet the *physical* component of Rangeland Health Standards 2 and 5, implement grazing systems which will alleviate hot season impacts and increase desirable herbaceous and woody riparian vegetation to attain proper functioning condition appropriate to soil, climate, and landform and also to promote the achievement of state water quality standards.

RIP REC 4: In pastures, where, because of livestock grazing impacts, riparian/wetland areas do not meet the *biological* component of Rangeland Health Standards 2 and 5, implement grazing systems to achieve an upward trend appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

RIP REC 5: Avoid new spring developments and remove developments from water sources that are not essential for livestock management. Similarly, avoid new pipeline construction that sequesters natural water sources thereby desiccating other wetland areas.

RIP REC 6: Where spring developments exist, implement proper trough placement away from wet areas so that livestock are not concentrated on fragile wet soils and vegetation. Ensure that troughs are equipped with valves or water return systems to prevent leakage and diversion of water away from the stream channel or riparian/wetland area.

RIP REC 7: Relocate Exchange Spring and Coffeepot Spring pipelines out of riparian meadows and restore associated meadows to remedy stream channel flow interception, erosion, and exposed hydric soils caused by the original pipeline placement.

RIP REC 9: Relocate or repair road crossings in New Road Spring and Three Week Spring drainages that impair riparian/wetland areas and water quality. Repair road at New Road Spring where it crosses, intercepts, and channels streamflow along the road. Relocate and repair the road crossing at Three Week Spring to stabilize a head cut and prevent an upstream migration that could endanger wetland habitat.

RIP REC 10: Deviations in authorized annual grazing use within pastures supporting riparian communities will be considered on a case basis after a review of existing resource conditions is conducted by the Jordan Resource Area Interdisciplinary Team.

WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT / SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES (WLDF)

The following recommendations address Rangeland Health Standard 5 (*Native, T&E, or locally important species*– Terrestrial):

WLDF REC1: Manage LCGMA in a way that will maintain a large geographic extent of complex sagebrush shrublands capable of supporting terrestrial wildlife species of management importance. By doing so, BLM will conserve valuable sagebrush steppe habitats that possess ICBEMP Terrestrial Source Habitat qualities and conform to the wildlife-community based objective identified in the SEORMP.

WLDF REC2: Design future land treatment disturbances within LCGMA so the geographic extent of large blocks of grassland habitat (320 acres or larger) is limited and a high level of sagebrush habitat connectivity among LCGMA grazing allotment pastures is maintained.

WLDF REC3: Manage to maintain or improve the distribution and health of deep rooted native perennial grasses and native forbs important to native wildlife.

WLDF REC4: Mechanical methods of land treatment are preferred over fire disturbance or chemical applications.

WLDF REC5: Avoid new water developments for the purpose of extending livestock grazing access into previously un-grazed rangelands that support greater sage-grouse nesting and early brood-rearing activities.

WLDF REC6: Avoid temporary non-renewable native range grazing use authorizations in pastures that support sage grouse nesting and early brood-rearing activities.

WLDF REC7: Adjust livestock grazing sequences so that stream, wetland, and meadow quality and quantity is improved over time.

WLDF REC8: Expend upland habitat restoration dollars (for the purpose of improving upland habitat structure and forage quality in monotypic crested wheatgrass habitats) in Jordan Resource Area locations other than Starvation Seeding. Due to the relatively high level of sagebrush habitat connectivity already existing within LCGMA, limited federal dollars available for restoration and enhancement would be more wisely spent where greater benefits to wildlife habitat values would be anticipated.

RANGELAND/GRAZING USE MANAGEMENT (RANGE)

The following recommendations address Rangeland Health Standard 1 (*Watershed function, uplands*) and Standard 3 (*Ecological processes*):

RANGE REC1: Manage grazing to provide for sustainable rangelands and livestock operations.

RANGE REC2: Re-establish utilization transects in all pastures. Utilization readings are to be taken at established locations.

RANGE REC3: Allow for 15 days flexibility in pasture move dates, as long as use is within permitted AUMs, consistent with resource objectives, and is applied for in writing.

RANGE REC4: Provide livestock watering facilities, and fences where needed, consistent with other resource values.

RANGE REC5: Proposed permittee deviations from planned grazing use authorizations must be provided in writing to the authorized officer at least two weeks prior to the proposed change date.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS (WSR)

WSR REC1: The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 mandates that BLM “protect and enhance” the “outstandingly remarkable values” (ORVs) for which the Owyhee River system received its federal “wild” designation. For the West Little Owyhee River located entirely within the Louse Canyon GMA, the ORVs include recreation, scenic and wildlife values.

The GMA also borders a portion of the Main Owyhee River, which adds cultural and geologic ORVs to the three listed above.

Planned management actions and projects should, therefore, both protect and enhance those ORVs of the affected river segments. The ORVs most prone to potentially negative impact would probably be the scenic and recreation values, since man-made alterations (i.e., projects) to the natural environment could create unnatural, visible contrasts that might affect visitors' recreational experiences and opportunities. Projects should be designed so that the net benefits they provide, such as healthier riparian communities with more diverse species composition, would visually outweigh intrusions from the projects' actual structural or architectural components.

WSR REC2: Manage the LCGMA in accordance with the District Court's Order of Modified Injunction while implementing adaptive management described in the riparian, vegetation, wildlife and grazing sections, which will enhance ORVs in areas available to grazing.

CULTURAL RESOURCES (CR)

CR REC1: Design water source exclusion fences and other livestock exclusion fences to encompass cultural resource sites to surface manifestation boundaries.

CR REC2: Avoid new spring developments that include surface or subsurface ground disturbance in areas where cultural resources are present

CR REC3: Avoid new spring developments and remove developments from water sources that are not essential for livestock management where cultural resource sites are located. Similarly, avoid new pipeline construction that sequesters natural water sources thereby desiccating other wetland areas where cultural resources are present.

CR REC4: Where spring developments exist, implement proper trough placement away from wet areas so that livestock are not concentrated on fragile wet soils and vegetation where cultural resources are present. Ensure that troughs are equipped with valves or water return systems to prevent leakage and diversion of water away from the stream channel or riparian/wetland area.

CR REC5: Manage LCGMA in a way that will maintain a large geographic extent of complex sagebrush shrublands. By doing so, BLM will conserve valuable cultural resources in situ. Native vegetation of sagebrush steppe ensures minimum erosional activity that may threaten cultural resources.

CR REC6: Manage to maintain or improve the distribution and health of deep rooted native perennial grasses and native forbs. By doing so, BLM will conserve valuable cultural resources in situ. Native vegetation of sagebrush steppe ensures minimum erosional activity that may threaten cultural resources.